



# MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS

## LESSON PLANNING RESOURCES FOR BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE ORCHESTRA

Dear Music Educator,

“The President’s Own” United States Marine Chamber Orchestra has created the following lesson planning materials as a supplemental resource to be used with its Fall 2020 Music in the Schools virtual performances. The video for string players is titled “String Colors: Painting with Sound” and can be found on the Marine Band’s YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/C5ohculY0tU>.

### Performance Description:

For musicians in beginner/intermediate orchestra. This program showcases the incredible world of musical colors and textures possible with string instruments. The Marine Chamber Orchestra introduces a variety of fun and evocative chamber music, reinforces elements of basic string musicianship, and shows students what they can look forward to as they continue to explore their musical journey as a string musician.

We hope you find these materials useful for your classroom and that your students realize a newfound appreciation and understanding of music.

Please also take a moment to explore our other educational materials at [www.marineband.marines.mil/Educational](http://www.marineband.marines.mil/Educational).

Semper Fidelis,

“The President’s Own”  
United States Marine Band

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Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

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### String Colors: Painting with Sound

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)      Allegro moderato from String Quartet, Opus 64, No. 5, *Lark*

*Fun Fact: Joseph Haydn is referred to as the “Father of the String Quartet” because he wrote so many great pieces for two violins, viola, and cello: 68 of them!*

Johannes Brahms (1833–97)      Allegro ma non troppo from String Sextet, Opus 18

*Fun Fact: You probably heard music by Johannes Brahms when you were a baby. His Wiegenlied (Lullaby), written in 1868, is still one of the most recognizable lullabies today.*

Lev Zhurbin (b. 1978)      “Bagel on the Malecón” from *The Vjola Suite* (2005–08)

*Fun Fact: The title of this piece comes from composer Lev Zhurbin’s dream of eating a delicious New York bagel on the Malecón, which is the main boardwalk in Havana, Cuba.*

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)      Scherzo from String Quartet in E minor, Opus 44, No. 2

*Fun Fact: Felix Mendelssohn wrote 13 string symphonies between ages 12 and 14!*

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)      “The Orangery” from *Plan and Elevation* (2015)

*Fun Fact: Caroline Shaw was the youngest ever recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for music.*

*Fun Fact: An orangery is a greenhouse for fruit trees. This piece was inspired by the orangery at Dumbarton Oaks, a historic home and gardens in Washington, D.C.*

Kenji Bunch (b. 1973) “Porch Picking” from *String Circle* (2005)

*Fun Fact: Kenji Bunch can multitask as a one-man band by playing viola, adding percussion with a bow technique called “chopping,” and singing all at the same time.*

Kala Ramnath (b. 1967) *Amrit* (2016)  
arranged by Reena Esmail

*Fun Fact: The low drone is created by an Indian string instrument called the tambura, whose strings are plucked in a continuous loop to create a bed of sound.*

*Fun Fact: The tabla is a North Indian percussion instrument, which is played with fingers and palms to create a variety of sounds.*

This piece was commissioned for Fifty for the Future: The Kronos Learning Repertoire, a project of the Kronos Performing Arts Association. The score and parts are available for free online at [kronosquartet.org](http://kronosquartet.org).

Kenji Bunch (b. 1973) “Overdrive” from *String Circle* (2005)

*GySgt Karen Johnson and SSgt Foster Wang, violin*  
*GySgt Sarah Hart, viola*  
*SSgt Caroline Bean Stute, cello*

*MSgt Christopher Shieh, viola*  
*SSgt Charlaine Prescott, cello*  
*MGySgt Aaron Clay, bass*



## QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION & WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- The video opened with a quote by conductor Leopold Stokowski: “A painter paints his pictures on canvas. But musicians paint their pictures on silence.” What does this mean to you? Do you think it’s a true statement? Does this quote change the way you listen to or play music? If so, how?
- The Marines in the video talked about color, texture, and pulse. What do these words mean in daily life? What do they mean in a musical context? Have you ever heard someone talk about music using these words before? Do you ever see images when you listen to music?
- Can you imagine your bow as a paintbrush? How is the physical act of moving your bow on the string similar to painting on a canvas? How is the creative act of making music similar to painting on a canvas?
- Joseph Haydn is known as the “Father of the String Quartet.” What is a string quartet? Where and when did Haydn write quartets? How might it be different to play in a string quartet than in an orchestra?
- The Marine musicians performed the Sextet by Johannes Brahms without a conductor. Watch the video again, this time paying special attention to how the players move and interact. How do they use their bodies to communicate with each other to play together?
- Lev Zhurbin’s “Bagel on the Malecón” refers to a famous boardwalk on the island of Cuba. Where is Cuba? What is the climate like there? What dance steps would you choreograph to Zhurbin’s piece?
- Felix Mendelssohn started writing string symphonies at age 12. What was his music education like before that? How was his music education similar to or different from yours? What sort of music would you like to write?
- Caroline Shaw was an artist-in-residence at Dumbarton Oaks. What does it mean to be an artist-in-residence? Where is Dumbarton Oaks, and why is it an interesting place? Is there a particular place you would like to be an artist-in-residence?
- What is the Pulitzer Prize? What piece did Caroline Shaw write to earn the prize? How old was she when she won it? Do you know the names of any other Pulitzer Prize winners?

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## QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION & WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- Kenji Bunch has lots of different jobs in music: playing viola, composing music, teaching at a university, conducting a youth orchestra, and being an artistic director for a nonprofit organization. Look up one of these jobs. What type of training or schooling does it require? Which of those jobs would you most like to do and why?
- Kala Ramnath specializes in music from northern India. Watch her describe the special techniques she uses in the video below. How is her playing position different from what you've learned about the violin? What kind of music is special to your family and your culture? Are there any unique musical colors you can create on your instrument?
  - » Video: <https://youtu.be/MIOhtLJ675g>
- The Marine musicians used words to describe the ingredients that made each piece special before they performed it. Think of a piece you have played recently. What words would you use to describe it to a friend from school who hasn't heard it before? Would you choose different words if you were talking to someone from your orchestra class?
- Learn about the history of the Marine Chamber Orchestra with the links below. Why are there string players in the Marine Band? Where does the orchestra most often perform? What is its mission? If you had to "double" on a second instrument, which would you pick?
  - » Website: <https://www.marineband.marines.mil/About/Ensembles/Marine-Chamber-Orchestra/>
  - » Video: [https://youtu.be/CHzsje\\_WDG4](https://youtu.be/CHzsje_WDG4)

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## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- The Marine musicians created a beautiful singing sound by staying aware of the contact between the bow and the string. While playing, imagine the hairs on your bow are the bristles of a paint brush.
  - » Practice open string whole bows while watching the contact point between the bow and string from tip to frog and keeping a relaxed balance of your fingers of the bow.
  - » For a more advanced version, adjust the contact point by adding “bridge touches.” Guide the bow between the fingerboard and bridge and back again on each whole bow.
- The quartet played sparkling *spiccato* in the piece by Felix Mendelssohn. Improve your *spiccato* by creating and counting individual “drops” of sound, imagining they are drops of paint. Drop the bow from above the string to bounce just once before catching it. Keep the fingers relaxed and balanced on the bow. Advance to two bounces before you catch, then three, four, five, etc.
- Caroline Shaw used *bariolage* to create a special color for her piece “The Orangery.” Develop your *bariolage* by practicing smooth string crossings, adjusting the right elbow level for each string and staying aware of the bowhairs as they pass onto each string. Use the “Developing *Bariolage*” exercise in Appendix A to begin on open strings and work up to simple chords; increase tempo to develop *bariolage*.
- Try creating multi-track music for your instrument like Lev Zhurbin did. Start by recording yourself playing a scale, play it back, and experiment playing with the recording as your accompaniment. Experiment with different types of technology to layer tracks.
- Download the *Amrit* backing track at the link below. Practice D Major scales (one, two, or three octaves) while listening and tuning to the drone. When the percussion enters on the track, improvise your own rhythms.
  - » Backing Track: <https://50ftf.kronosquartet.org/composers/kala-ramnath>
- In addition to the Sextet in the video, Johannes Brahms wrote another piece in a rocking 3/4 meter that may sound familiar. The sheet music can be found in Appendix B. Try singing the melody first, then practice it on your instrument.
- Practice your favorite piece without your bow by using *pizzicato* in rest position, like the quintet did for Kenji Bunch’s “Porch Picking.” Use a metronome to keep a steady tempo and prevent rushing. Relax and enjoy the space between the notes.
- Choose your favorite fast passage. Practice it slowly, and then work it up with a metronome. Try it *sul ponticello* like the beginning of Kenji Bunch’s “Overdrive” to mix things up and create a new color.
- Invent a new color on your instrument. Try using the bow in different ways or tapping on an unexpected part of the instrument. Share with your class.

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## SHEET MUSIC ANALYSIS

Refer to Appendix C for the score of the beginning of Felix Mendelssohn's Scherzo from String Quartet in E minor, Opus 44, No. 2. Complete the exercise by adding the appropriate markings to the music.

1. Write Violin 1 next to the top line, Violin 2 next to the second line, Viola next to the third line, and Cello next to the fourth line.
2. With an arrow **→**, mark the key signature.
3. With a square **□**, mark the time signature.
4. With a circle **○**, mark accents and sforzandos. (Hint: sforzando is abbreviated sf or sfz and means to play with strong emphasis.)
5. With an underline **\_\_\_\_\_**, mark the dynamics.
6. With brackets **{ }**, mark the tempo.
7. With a star **★**, mark all the sixteenth notes. (Hint: some of them look like a quarter note with two flags through the stem.)
8. Answer the following questions:
  - » What clef does the viola use?
  - » Which instrument has the longest set of rests? (Hint: it's eleven beats long.)
  - » What does Allegro di molto mean?

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## STUDENT REFLECTION WORKSHEET

As you watch the video, pay special attention to the musician from “The President’s Own” who plays your instrument. Notice their sound, posture, breath, preparatory movements, and overall demeanor.

1. What instrument do you play and how long have you been playing it?
2. Do you play your instrument outside of the classroom? If so, how? If not, what are ways you could?
3. Describe the posture of one of the Marine musicians. What instrument are they playing? Do they look tense or relaxed? Are they sitting up straight or standing?
4. Name one thing you notice about the technique of the musician you described in question #3 that may help you as you practice.
5. Were there parts of the video that made you want to try something new or challenging? What would you like to try?
6. Describe something you liked about the sound the musician was able to achieve on your instrument. (Hint: This could be related to tone, articulation, clarity, or intonation.)
7. What is one thing that you would like to improve about your playing? List two concrete ways you could practice this aspect of your playing.
8. List two questions you have for the musicians from “The President’s Own” United States Marine Chamber Orchestra who appeared in the video.

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# Developing Bariolage

## APPENDIX A

TIP 1: Adjust your right elbow for each string.

TIP 2: Imagine the hairs on your bow are bristles of a paintbrush passing gently over each string.

TIP 3: For the second line, keep your left fingers down the whole time.

### VIOLIN

Violin musical notation for the first instrument, showing two staves with various rhythmic patterns and bar lines.

### VIOLA

Viola musical notation for the first instrument, showing two staves with various rhythmic patterns and bar lines.

### CELLO

Cello musical notation for the first instrument, showing two staves with various rhythmic patterns and bar lines.

### BASS

Bass musical notation for the first instrument, showing two staves with various rhythmic patterns and bar lines.

fingering: 0 4 1 1 4 0  
string: a d g g d a *sim.*

# Lullaby

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

VIOLIN

**APPENDIX B**



Violin part musical notation, consisting of three staves in treble clef, key signature of two sharps (D major), and 3/4 time signature. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a 3/4 time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, with a dotted quarter note in the second measure. The second and third staves continue the melodic line with similar rhythmic patterns, ending with a double bar line.

VIOLA



Viola part musical notation, consisting of three staves in alto clef, key signature of two sharps (D major), and 3/4 time signature. The first staff begins with an alto clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a 3/4 time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, with a dotted quarter note in the second measure. The second and third staves continue the melodic line with similar rhythmic patterns, ending with a double bar line.

CELLO / BASS



Cello/Bass part musical notation, consisting of three staves in bass clef, key signature of two sharps (D major), and 3/4 time signature. The first staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a 3/4 time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, with a dotted quarter note in the second measure. The second and third staves continue the melodic line with similar rhythmic patterns, ending with a double bar line.

# SCHERZO.

Allegro di molto. ♩ = 72.

First system of the musical score. It consists of four staves (treble and bass clefs for both hands). The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first two staves are marked with *f* and *p*. The last two staves are marked with *cresc.* and *f*.

Second system of the musical score. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are marked with *f* and *p*. The last two staves are marked with *p* and *staccato*.

Third system of the musical score. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are marked with *f* and *pp*. The last two staves are marked with *dimin.* and *pp*.

Fourth system of the musical score. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are marked with *cresc.* and *f*. The last two staves are marked with *cresc.* and *f*.

Fifth system of the musical score. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are marked with *dimin.* and *p*. The last two staves are marked with *dimin.* and *p*.